REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing, re-examination and reconsideration of the subject matter identified in caption, as amended, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.112.

Claims 24, 25 and 40 have been amended to specify that the claimed tricondensate polyfunctional isocyanate composition contains less than 10% of tricondensate allophanates. Claim 26 has been amended to insert a hyphen before "a biuret group," to correct the last formula to provide a missing hydrogen atom, and to correct the definition of "m". Claim 57 has been amended to correct a typographical error. Claims 24-58 are currently pending.

In reply to the first issue raised in the Office communication mailed April 8, 2004, claims 24, 25 and 40 have been amended to specify that the isocyanate composition comprises less than 10% of tricondensate allophanates. This is consistent with claims 46-58. Thus, all claims now recite this feature.

With respect to the Examiner's comments regarding the Declaration filed January 16, 2004, Applicants submit that the Tables in §§1 and 2 in Appendix III of the Declaration clearly indicate that the claimed compositions comprise less than 10% of tricondensate allophanates. Specifically, the last lines of each of said Tables indicate the content of "isocyanurate allophanate polyisocyanates" to be "zero" (i.e., less than 10%) for each of Applicants' examples (Example R1 and Example R3). The term "isocyanurate – allophanate polyisocyanates compounds" which appears in said Tables has to be obviously understood as "tricondensate allophanates," as defined in the specification – last paragraph – on page 22 and beginning of page 23. Those of ordinary skill would understand that the terminology in the Tables could be

read as: tricondensate allophanates = isocyanurate-allophanate polyisocyanate compounds.

With respect to the Examiner's comments concerning the term (cyclo)condensation, Applicants recognize that their arguments are directed to cyclocondensation products. No non-cyclo tricondensates are disclosed in the cited prior art, where the compositions lead to isocyanurates, i.e., cyclic condensates. The tricondensates of the present invention are defined as the reaction product of at least one tricondensate polyfunctional isocyanate and at least one allophanate (see Claim 24). Clearly, those of ordinary skill would understand that the parenthesis is used to differentiate biuret compounds (non-cyclic tricondensates) from isocyanurate trimers (cyclic tricondensates). In support of this, attention is drawn to the possible biuret structure of the variable A in Claim 26, illustrated by Example 6 of the present invention. Those of ordinary skill would recognize and understand these distinctions.

Regarding claim 26, the last structural formula therein has been corrected to insert the hydrogen substituent inadvertently omitted from the formula. The penultimate line has been amended to correct the definition of "m". This change to "0 to 2" is supported by the specification and originally filed claims.

Moreover, the value of "n" can indeed be 4, for example, when Q is the residue of pentaerythritol [$(HO\text{-}CH_2)_4\text{-}C$] on which are grafted 4 carbamate groups of the formula [-O-C(=O)-NH-] carried by the rest of the isocyanate A. The valence of A in this case is 4, i.e., m = 2.

Applicants believe they have addressed all concerns raised in the Office Letter of April 8, 2004. An early reconsideration of all claims is believed to be in order.

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order and such action is respectfully requested. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (703) 838-6683 at his earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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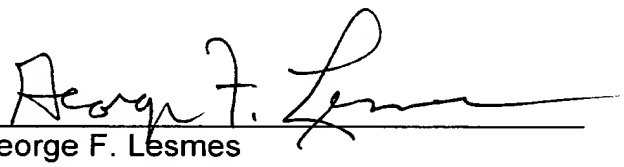
Date: May 7, 2004

By: 

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